

1916

# ADDRESS

TO THE ELECTORS OF VANCOUVER

—BY—

## ROBERT CASSIDY, K.C.

Anti-Machine Conservative } Candidate  
Anti-Prohibition Act }

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ELECTORS OF VANCOUVER.

Gentlemen:—

I hope, a few years hence, when presenting myself for re-election, to be able to begin my address with the words, "Electors, Ladies and Gentlemen."

### Loyal Conservative.

It is for the purpose of strengthening and not of weakening the great Party in this Province to which I belong that I present myself to you as a candidate.

### Party Machine Nomination System.

The system of conventions, primaries, and organized manipulation affecting the nomination of candidates, is not a British institution. It has been adapted by Canadian professional politicians from practices in the United States of America. It fosters machine and boss government. It necessarily imposes the patronage system upon the country, for political patronage is employed as a lubricant of all party machines.

### Its Malign Influence.

The malign influence of the system has been exemplified in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. So far in British Columbia I think we may say, broadly speaking, that it has not given us dishonest government.

### Boss Rule.

It has given us Boss Rule, accompanied by the fiction of representative government, conducted, through the agency of machine created and boss driven automata, who are imposed upon the electors by a small group of professional politicians, to whom these Echoes owe office, from whom they expect re-nomina-

tion, whose orders they obey, and to whom alone they recognize responsibility.

"Such obedience, bane of all genius, virtue, freedom, truth, makes slaves of men, and of the human frame a mechanized automaton."

I do not say that there are not some good men nominated by the organizations. The machines must see to that. Even intrinsically good men are not good representatives of the people, when they wear the collar of a clique.

#### **Right of Nomination Usurped by Organizations.**

The power of these political organizations rests entirely upon their usurped function of dictating the candidates. The Conservative Party in this constituency is a great company of more than twelve thousand five hundred men. The politicians have set up an organization under the name of the Conservative Association, which has a relatively insignificant membership. Of these, perhaps fifty men are practically in control. The theory of the organization is that the twelve thousand five hundred electors have practically surrendered their suffrages, and freedom of choosing their representatives, and have given their proxies in the hands of the members of the Association, who, in turn, have handed them, along with their own, to the inner group, which is thus put in a position to put forth its Linemen Candidates as the choice of the whole Party.

#### **Linemen Candidates.**

These Linemen consider that they have a vested interest of the most valuable kind in the right to these nominations. Their position is so strong—owing to the character of the services which they render to the organization in season and out of season—that they cannot be sidetracked, even by the organization itself, without being recompensed for it.

#### **Party Jeopardized by Carrying Linemen.**

It is, of course, inimical to the prospects of the Party at an election that it should be obliged to carry men with a record making them obviously distasteful to the electors at large, but the organizations rely upon candidates being afraid to come to the electors direct.

#### **Hobson's Choice.**

The electors are, therefore, on all ordinary occasions given the Hobson's choice between swallowing their own organization nominees and voting for the opposite political party.

#### **Let Electors Resume Control.**

I have come to you to give you an opportunity of pronouncing with a loud voice that men need not be afraid to come straight to the electors, and that other things being equal, you will prefer direct candidates to machine nominees. If I am elected upon this platform—so distinctly set up—my return will destroy the illusion upon which the machines depend.

#### **Liberal Party "Rip Van Winkle."**

#### **Liberal Machine Not in Working Order Except as a Plugger.**

The Liberal Party in this Province is a "Rip Van Winkle" but recently come to life again. Its organization is brand new, and the most favorable possible criticism upon it is that it is not yet in good working order, except as a plugger.

### **Low Gear Evolution of Conservative Machine.**

The Liberal machine distrusted its capability of successfully performing the interesting popular evolution so accurately carried out by the perfectly working Conservative machine, which proved that it could obtain identical results when working either on high or low gear.

### **Conservative Revolt at Bye-Elections.**

At the recent bye-elections there was a strong indication of revolt on the part of the Conservative Party at large, from the conditions I have named. There were other elements involved, of course. A more or less effective attack was made by the Liberals upon the Government upon charges of mal-administration—charges which were effective because not at the moment effectively answered. The Conservative machine was running the bye-elections on behalf of the Party.

### **Machine as Debater.**

It is a very poor debater. Its powers of persuasion are of a different order. It sends small-fry—political—scouts among the electors in the name of the Conservative Party, canvassing votes. The ordinary way of getting rid of such people, while keeping inviolate the secrecy of the ballot, which the law tries to secure, and at the same time avoiding the enmity of the organizations, is to simulate concurrence.

### **Abolish Canvassing.**

I may say here that I would abolish canvassing, by law. It directly contradicts the secrecy of the ballot, fosters lying, sneaking and political prostitution.

The Premier was at Kamloops until the last two days of the Vancouver bye-election campaign. The Dominion Trust, the Indian cases, the P. G. E. matter, the Attorney-General's private office, and other subjects of attack were meanwhile blackened in aspect by Liberal orators.

### **Conservative Revolt Against Boss Rule.**

These things no doubt affected the electors, but the main cause of the Conservative slide, to the extent to which it really took place, which was—for a reason sufficiently dealt with elsewhere in this campaign—not nearly so great as is generally supposed, was, in the main, a revolt against Boss rule, and the absence of independence, criticism and opposition in the House. Some put it that the Conservative Party threw a monkey-wrench into its own machine for the purpose of destroying it. Others say the object was to get rid of the Chief Engineer, who was said to be running things to suit himself.

### **Conservatives, Do Not Put Your Party Out of Power.**

The Conservative Party, however, is not a fool. I think it did not then, and does not now, wish to put its party out of power.

### **Resume Direct Electoral Control.**

A resumption of direct electoral control by encouraging direct candidature would have the effect of turning the organization, which has certain necessary and excellent functions, into a good servant, from being as it is now, an exceedingly bad master of the Party. After all, the steam to run the engine is in the control of the electors. It is contained in the ballot.

### **The Organization Should Have Taken Warning.**

What the electors did at the bye-elections was to turn off the power partially, and even to switch some of it elsewhere. One would have thought that, warned by such an incident, the Chief Engineer and the organization would have passed a self-denying ordinance, and that more of the nomination ticket holders would have been shunted.

### **More Attention Should Be Paid to the Party.**

In particular, one would have thought that more attention would have been paid to the interests of the Conservative Party, as a Party, and that such an incident as the taking of a Liberal into the Government, under the (entirely illusory) expectation of winning Liberal or Independent support thereby, would not have taken place.

### **Alex. Stewart Ought Not to Have Been Taken Into Government.**

The Premier is responsible for that. If I had been in his Government, I would have instantly handed in my resignation, as Richard McBride did, when Mr. Dunsmuir took Winchester Brown into the Cabinet.

### **Bowser Not Responsible for Welsh, Duke or Leek.**

On the other hand, the Premier is not really responsible for such incidents as the compensation of Mr. Welsh for the loss of his machine ticket to the electorate, by sending him to Europe to take the soldiers' vote, or the nomination of Mr. Duke or Mr. Leek. Those things were forced by the machine, and were so inimical to the prospects of the Government at the general election as to show that the Premier could not prevent them. In other words, the Premier is out of control of the machine.

### **Conservatives, Get to Business.**

Conservatives, let us get down to business and deal with the situation with which we are confronted today. There is no need to smash the Conservative organization. There is no need to smash the Premier. They merely misunderstand their true relations to the mass of the Conservative Party.

### **Express Domestic Dissatisfaction by Voting for Cassidy, Not for Liberals.**

The most misguided of all means of expressing your dissatisfaction with your own party machine and with the Government, is to cast your ballots for the nominees of the party machine of your political opponents, a party with which you do not agree, of whose honesty you are not assured, which, even if we assume everything



else in its favor, has obviously no constructive programme, and whose leaders have given to the country no indication of possessing administrative talent.

### **Conservatives In Majority.**

That the Conservatives are in a majority in the electorate, both in this constituency, and in the Province as a whole, is practically admitted by the Liberals themselves, as is shown by the fact that they do not anticipate success if they merely poll the whole Liberal vote, as they expect to do, but are telling us that this general election is not a party contest, but is a fight against mis-government. The truth is that, after abundant investigation, mis-government has not been made out to the satisfaction of any fair-minded man.

### **Sustain the Government, But All Vote for Cassidy.**

My idea is that, under the circumstances, the best thing for the Conservative Party as a whole, today, is to vote Conservative—every one of you, however, voting for me—and sustain the Government. Anything that is wrong with the management of our party we can cure. If I am elected, and particularly if I am elected by a good majority upon this platform of direct candidature and direct electoral control—which I feel sure I will be—at one blow you destroy Boss government and the domination of the machine.

If you do this, the best men of our Party, the men who decline to graduate through the University on Seymour Street,—but are up till now unfortunately obsessed with the idea that there is no other avenue to the Legislature,—will in future offer themselves to you in the same way as I am doing.

### **Open Road to Men, Not Professional Politicians.**

Please think of this. You will open, both to yourselves and to your sons, who may have talent and an honest aspiration to serve their country, a road which is now practically closed to all but professional politicians.

### **Difference in Independence Between Direct Candidates and Machine Nominees.**

I need not point out the difference between what my position would be in the House, if elected, as distinguished from that of organization nominees, in regard to freedom of speech and action. Without suggesting any native superiority in myself in regard to talent, courage, initiative or independence of spirit, over any of these gentlemen, I do suggest that there would be a vast inherent difference in my effectiveness, arising from my mode of election, as taking my mandate from the electors direct, being responsible to the Party alone, and in no sense indebted or subservient to the machine.

Any of you electors who think it more important to have such a representative in the Legislature, than to exercise the privilege of distributing your five other votes among the machine candidates of either one side or the other, should plump for me, so as to put my election beyond peradventure.

# **The So-Called Prohibition Act**

## **ELECTORS:—**

A question of great public importance has been sent to you, by referendum, for your decision at this election, namely, whether the so-called Prohibition Act meets with your approval or not.

### **The Battle of the Mercenaries.**

Vigorous paid propaganda for and against the Act are published in the newspapers. In these circumstances, how are the electors to decide between the antagonists? It is the plain duty of public men, of men who are proposing themselves as representatives and guides of the people, to discuss this question with you and to state their convictions, whatever they may be.

### **Cowardly Silence of Party Hack Politicians.**

Of the eighteen candidates for Vancouver, it is plain that seventeen are mere party hack politicians, who are afraid to discuss or give an opinion upon this great question, upon which the division of opinion of the electorate cannot be estimated in advance. There is a cowardly conspiracy of silence among them. They are equally afraid of the Prohibitionist, and of the Anti-Prohibitionist vote.

### **Duty of Representative Men.**

In my view, it is my duty to apply my mind to this Act, to state my conclusion upon it, and to assist the electors upon the question to the best of my ability, regardless of the effect which my doing so may have upon my prospects of success at the polls.

### **Appeal to Moderate Men Who Favor Temperance.**

To those of you who are Prohibitionists—and I respect them,—to those of you who are favorable to readjustment of the liquor laws, so as if possible, to reduce or eliminate intemperance,—to those of you who would abolish the bar and the treating system,—to those of you who would deal with the kind and quality of liquors, or the conditions under which liquors are, in future, to be sold or used in our Province,—to those who can have no solid ground of disagreement with me in my opinion of this Act, and yet who think of voting against me because I am against it, I would make an appeal to reconsider your determination.

### **People Who Respect Temperate, Equal, Just, Sane Legislation.**

Any of you electors who are favorable to real Prohibition or real temperance legislation, applied fairly and equally to all our people,—any of you who do not see any sane reason why the inevitable trade in liquor to be freely supplied to, and used by at least one-half of our people under this Act, should be taken out of the hands of our own dealers, and thrown into the hands of dealers outside the Province,—dealers over whom we have no control whatever, either in regard to kind or quality of liquor sold, or otherwise,—dealers who do not pay taxes or otherwise assist in the support of the Province, who will benefit at the expense, and because of the loss of the same business by our own citizens,—or any

of you who think it wrong to establish an arbitrary distinction between different sections of the community as to the right to use liquor as a beverage.

#### **Vote for Cassidy.**

I ask all such real Prohibitionists, temperance people, and plain citizens who respect equality, justice and sanity in legislation to condemn this Act and vote for me. I admit that, by reason of their strong self-interest, I may expect the vote of the men who justly, naturally and vigorously resent legislation which takes away their business, not for the purpose of putting an end to that class of business, but for the purpose of transferring it, without any reason acceptable outside of a lunatic asylum, to men carrying on the like trade outside our Province. I am not condemning the Act, however, because of the interests of these men, but on much wider considerations.

#### **Root Principle of Act Wrong.**

The Act is a thoroughly bad Act from every standpoint. There is only one thing for the electors to do, and that is to throw it out. The root principle of it is wrong, and no amount of amendment in detail can cure it. Make way for reasonable liquor legislation on correct principles.

#### **Domesticates Liquor in Homes and Encourages Treating.**

Perhaps the two worst features of the Act, from a moral standpoint, are that it domesticates liquor drinking by forcing it from the saloon into the home. There is now, of course, the right to drink in the home, but men do not here do their drinking in their homes, but outside. Up till now drink has never been domesticated in practice in the homes of Canada. The Act encourages, one might say necessitates, the adoption of the treating system, which is the cause of most of serious drinking at bars. Treating is prohibited in England. If this Act passes, the only place where a man who has not a "private dwelling house" can get a drink in British Columbia will be in the "private dwelling house" of a friend, and human nature being what it is, there will be an enormous amount of entertaining of this kind.

#### **Medical and Druggist Features Deteriorating.**

Putting aside the medical and druggist features of the Act, which cannot but have a deteriorating effect, making sneaks, liars and shufflers of men; the effect on the non "private dwelling house" group of the community, hard-working men, most of them, (I may confide in you that I live in one room myself), men accustomed to drink a little with their friends at times,—and really our working-men drink very little,—

#### **Arbitrary Distinctions Between Men.**

#### **Prohibition of Beverage Drinking Not Applied to "Private Dwelling House" People But to All Others.**

I say the effect on people like us, confronted with the spectacle of residence folk allowed a right of personal choice in regard to what they shall drink, which is arbitrarily denied to us by the Supermen, cannot be otherwise than injurious to our self-respect and our sense of liberty and equality. "Private dwelling house" includes a

suite in an apartment block, but does not, forsooth, include a single room in the same apartment block; the prohibition does not apply to people who can afford to keep up a "private dwelling house" out of their means, but, forsooth, applies to people who have to eke out their rent, of precisely the same class of house, by keeping even one boarder, or by keeping over three lodgers. It applies to people living in Hotels or in any house or building the rooms in which are leased to different persons (except suites in apartment blocks). It applies to all strangers and Tourists. People residing in private dwelling houses can keep drink and treat their friends to all the liquor they like.

#### **Police Raids on Those Stigmatized as Lower Classes.**

But any poor fellow living in, say, one room across the passage from such a suite or keeping a boarder or four lodgers in his house—or any of those boarders or lodgers—whom a police officer or constable has reason to suspect of "having liquor in his possession"—of being so presumptuous as to act as if he was one of the "better class," may have his place of abode broken into at any hour of the day or night by a constable on that mere suspicion—without a warrant—or rather on the sole warrant of this most unwarrantable Act.

#### **Did This Act Emanate from New Westminster?**

Electors, was this Act drawn up in Vancouver, or did it emanate from some of the inmates of a certain Provincial institution situated in New Westminster?

#### **Summing Up.**

This Act is not Prohibition. It is not favorable to temperance. It is unequal class legislation. It gratuitously transfers a traffic which it still permits, from our own merchants to merchants outside the Province. At a blow it confiscates enormous invested capital in hotels. It cuts off great sums of public revenue, necessarily causing great increase in taxation—although if we left the traffic which it still permits to exist, in the hands of our own merchants, we could tax them. It places strangers and tourists, whom it is so necessary to attract, in the same category as our discredited and prohibited class. Worst of all, this Act must bring to sane, able and responsible men in the great financial centres of the world the disturbing fear that this Province is addicted to confiscatory, ill-considered, intemperate, unequal, unjust and freak legislation, and they will treat us accordingly.

If any of you appreciate my courage in pronouncing my opinion upon this Act, as distinguished from the cowardly silence of the other seventeen candidates for Vancouver, and feel that I would be useful in the Legislature, I humbly suggest that you make sure of my election by plumping for me,—remember that there are two little political machines against me—and I will try to exercise a sane, temperate and moderating influence in the House upon this, as upon other questions.

And I remain, Electors, as I hope to be in a nearer sense after the 14th,

Your humble servant,

(Signed) **ROBERT CASSIDY.**

**DROP IN TO MY ELECTION HALL, 623 HASTINGS STREET, NEAR CORNER GRANVILLE, FOR CHOICE, AT 12.30 AND 8.00 P.M. EACH DAY, TILL ELECTION.**

**P.S.**—In view of Professor E. Odium's open letter to me (of today, 7th Sept., 1916), I wish to say that neither the liquor interests nor any one else, unfortunately, has given or subscribed any money towards my campaign. Perhaps some of you electors would like to remedy this.



